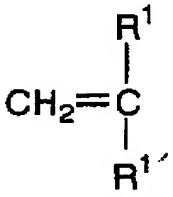
PROPOSED

Amendments to the Claims:

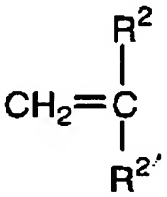
The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A toner for developing electrostatic images, comprising as a main component thereof a binder resin having a copolymer ~~comprising~~ consisting essentially of a combination of a high Tg monomer having a structure represented by the following structural formula (1) and a glass transition temperature of 50°C or higher, a low Tg monomer having a structure represented by the following structural formula (2) and a glass transition temperature of lower than 50°C, and a hydrophilic monomer having a structure represented by the following structural formula (3):

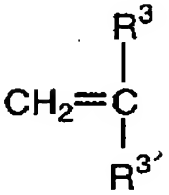
Structural formula (1)



Structural formula (2)



Structural formula (3)



wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 independently represent a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, an alkylester group, an alkylether group, a perfluoroalkyl group, a methoxy group, an ethoxy group, a halogen atom, a carbazole group, a pyrrolidone group, a ~~formal~~ formyl group, a cyclohexyl group, an alkyl group having a functional group, or an alkylester group having a functional group, $R^{1'}$ and $R^{2'}$ independently represent an alkyl group, an alkylester group, an alkylether group, a perfluoroalkyl group, a methoxy group, an ethoxy group, a halogen atom, a carbazole group, a pyrrolidone group, a ~~formal~~ formyl group, a cyclohexyl group, an alkyl group having a functional group, or an alkylester group having a functional group, and $R^{3'}$ represents a hydrophilic group.

PROPOSED

2. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein the toner is prepared by a wet process.

3. (Original) A toner according to claim 2, wherein the wet process comprises an aggregating step of obtaining aggregated particles by aggregating particles containing a binder resin in a dispersion in which the particles are dispersed, and a step of fusing the aggregated particles by heating.

4. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the high Tg monomer and the low Tg monomer is a methacrylic acid ester or an acrylic acid ester.

5. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic group represented by $R^{3'}$ contains any of a carboxyl group, a hydroxyl group, an amino group, a sulfonyl group, and an amido group.

6. (Currently Amended) A toner according to claim 1, wherein the binder resin contains a cyclic reactive group, and is cross-linked at a temperature ~~higher than the highest temperature at the time of toner preparation.~~of 100°C or more.

7. (Original) A toner according to claim 6, wherein the cyclic reactive group is any of an epoxy group, an aziridinyl group and an oxazoline group.

8. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, further comprising a compound containing a carboxyl group.

9. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein a shape factor SF1, of the toner, represented by the following equation (A) is 100 to 140:

Equation (A)

$$SF1 = ML^2/(4A/\pi) \times 100$$

wherein ML represents a maximum length (μm) of the toner, and A represents a projected area (μm^2) of the toner.

10. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein a surface property index value, of the toner, represented by the following equation (B) is 2.0 or smaller:

Equation (B) (surface property index value) = (specific surface area measured value)/(specific surface area calculated value)

wherein specific surface area calculated value is represented by $6\,\Sigma(n \times R^2)/\{\rho \times \Sigma(n \times R^3)\}$ and, in the equation representing the specific surface area calculated value, n represents the number of particles in a channel (number/channel) in a coulter counter, R represents a channel particle diameter (μm) in the coulter counter, ρ represents a toner density ($g/\mu m^3$), a division number of the channel is 16, and the intervals of division are 0.1 at a log scale.

11. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein an average particle diameter of toner particles is 3 to 9 μm.

12. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein a volume average particle size distribution index GSDv of toner particles is 1.30 or smaller.

13. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, wherein an apparent weight average molecular weight of the toner is 15,000 to 55,000.

14. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, further comprising a releasing agent.

15. (Original) A toner according to claim 1, comprising colorant particles whose median diameter is 100 to 330 nm.

16. (Original) A two-component developer, comprising the toner according to claim 1 and a carrier.

17. (Original) A two-component developer according to claim 16, wherein an average diameter of carrier particles is 20 to 150 μm.

18. (Withdrawn) A process for preparing the toner of claim 1, comprising an aggregating step of obtaining aggregated particles by aggregating particles containing a binder resin in a dispersion in which the particles are dispersed, and a fusing step of fusing the aggregated particles by heating.

19. (Withdrawn) An image forming method, comprising the steps of: forming an electrostatic latent image on an electrostatic image holding member, developing the electrostatic latent image with a developer to form a toner image, transferring the toner image onto a transfer receiving material, and thermally fixing the toner image, wherein the developer contains the toner of claim 1.

20. (Withdrawn) An image forming method according to claim 19, wherein the developer further contains a carrier.